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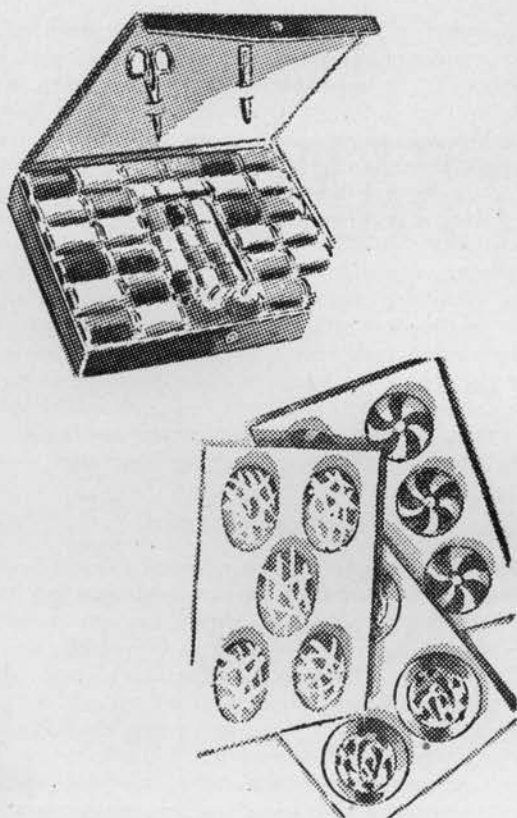
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Let Your Personality SPEAK For You

by Margaret Rutherford

So you won't talk? Your personality bubbles around in you like a dormant volcano. Why don't you let it out?

College students have ready opportunities to talk with others and to make friends. Almost every day you meet someone new in class, in the Union, through dating and parties, working with committees and living in groups. Are you wasting your opportunity to be that "at-ease" conversationalist you'd like to be?

Like a good game of tennis, conversation takes practice. The first time the ball comes over the net you find it difficult to judge just how to plant the next blow for a good send-back. With tennis you start out cold, but you've had a chance to talk to people for years!

It is just the new situation that leaves you cold. You can't fail if you are really interested in the other person. Forget yourself. Oust that feeling that you have nothing to say. Say something that gives the other person an opening and relieves him from the same fear.

The less you worry about it the easier meeting people becomes. And if you sincerely enjoy meeting the person, respond with a warm smile and show interest. Give him or her a chance and the conversation will take care of itself. It is the cold hello that is hard to answer.

Something New

Don't be afraid to try something new. It might seem a bit startling in your mind to start a conversation with something unexpected, but if it isn't personal or untactful, you'll be surprised how well it will work. If it's gay or unusual, the other person loses his self-consciousness and focuses on your remark with magic results. Here's an example—"Do the students at Iowa State drink enough cokes in one year to float a row boat?"

Good conversationalists can usually tell you something worthwhile about the persons they have met because they bother to find out about them. You can do this, too. Of course this shouldn't involve asking personal questions such as those about illness, money or family troubles. Make it a habit to notice things about you. Take mental notes on persons in the group. Give the other person a chance to express his personality and to tell you about himself.

Respond to others when they are talking and never interrupt when they are expressing their ideas. You can be pleasant whether you agree with the speaker or not. The person who never lets anyone feel left out or

unimportant is welcome in any group. Persons talk to her willingly.

You and your friends like to have their accomplishments remembered. Remember theirs. If Joe is a swimming star, ask him if he has topped that last backstroke record. If Mary sews, tell her you would like to see the new dress you hear she is making.

You don't have to strain yourself to be interesting. You are interesting. Believe that and have confidence in yourself. No one is liked equally by everyone and you will find others responding to you in various ways. In the long run if you believe in yourself and practice being happy and interested, people will like you.

Be Constructive

Chatterboxes are often bores. Be constructive instead, and don't talk unnecessarily when you have nothing to say. Be natural. Don't pretend to be someone you aren't. Natural persons are easy to like. This point was brought out by a large company when they instructed their salesmen to be average . . . dress, look, talk like the average persons.

If you're confident in yourself, you will never be a knocker, one who tries to tear people down to their size. You won't have to brag about your assets either. Give others a chance. Build them up, but be sincere about this.

The next time you make an acquaintance, find out if he or she is interested, say, in psychology. Or where they would like to travel if they had the chance. You might find out if they draw or sing or enjoy some sport that you like, such as bowling. Listen sincerely and don't be afraid to let your own interests and thoughts come out. Talk.

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